

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A mobile unit comprising:  
a wireless interface operable to:  
receive a first graded packet from a first base transceiver station (BTS)  
using a first wireless link, wherein the first graded packet includes a first metric  
associated with the first wireless link; and  
receive a second graded packet from a second BTS using a second  
wireless link, wherein the second graded packet includes a second metric associated  
with the second wireless link; and  
a processor operable to compare the first metric and the second metric and to  
select either the first graded packet or the second graded packet based on the  
comparison.
2. The mobile unit of Claim 1, wherein the first graded packet further  
includes a packet identifier, and the second graded packet further includes the packet  
identifier.
3. The mobile unit of Claim 1, wherein the first graded packet and the  
second graded packet each further includes voice information from a remote device.
4. The mobile unit of Claim 3, further comprising an output device  
operable to generate an audio signal based on the voice information from the selected  
graded packet.
5. The mobile unit of Claim 1, wherein the first metric is encoded in the  
first graded packet by the first BTS, and the second metric is encoded in the second  
graded packet by the second BTS.
6. The mobile unit of Claim 1, wherein each of the first metric and the  
second metric is a selected one of a signal strength, a signal-to-noise ratio, a bit error  
rate, and a carrier-to-noise ratio.



8 A method for selecting between a plurality of packets received by a mobile unit, the method comprising:

establishing a first wireless link with a first base transceiver station (BTS);

establishing a second wireless link with a second BTS;

5 receiving a first graded packet from the first BTS, wherein the first graded packet encodes a first metric associated with the first wireless link;

receiving a second graded packet from the second BTS, wherein the second graded packet encodes a second metric associated with the second wireless link;

comparing the first metric and the second metric; and

10 selecting either the first graded packet or the second graded packet based on the comparison.

9. The method of Claim 8, wherein the first graded packet further includes a packet identifier, and the second graded packet further includes the packet identifier.

10. The method of Claim 8, wherein the first graded packet and the second graded packet each further includes voice information from a remote device.

11. The method of Claim 10, further comprising generating an audio signal based on the voice information from the selected graded packet.

12. The method of Claim 8, wherein the first metric is encoded in the first graded packet by the first BTS, and the second metric is encoded in the second graded packet by the second BTS.

13. The method of Claim 8, wherein each of the first metric and the second metric is a selected one of a signal strength, a signal-to-noise ratio, a bit error rate, and a carrier-to-noise ratio.

14. The method of Claim 8, further comprising:  
receiving voice information from a user;  
generating a packet encoding the voice information; and  
communicating the packet for reception by the first BTS and the second BTS.

5 Sub 15  
15. A mobile unit comprising:  
means for establishing a first wireless link with a first base transceiver station (BTS);  
means for establishing a second wireless link with a second BTS;  
means for receiving a first graded packet from the first BTS, wherein the first graded packet encodes a first metric associated with the first wireless link;  
means for receiving a second graded packet from the second BTS, wherein the second graded packet encodes a second metric associated with the second wireless link;  
10 means for comparing the first metric and the second metric; and  
means for selecting either the first graded packet or the second graded packet based on the comparison.

15 16. The mobile unit of Claim 15, wherein the first graded packet further includes a packet identifier, and the second graded packet further includes the packet identifier.

20 17. The mobile unit of Claim 15, wherein the first graded packet and the second graded packet each further includes voice information from a remote device.

18. The mobile unit of Claim 17, further comprising means for generating an audio signal based on the voice information from the selected graded packet.

25 19. The mobile unit of Claim 15, wherein the first metric is encoded in the first graded packet by the first BTS, and the second metric is encoded in the second graded packet by the second BTS.

30 20. The mobile unit of Claim 15, wherein each of the first metric and the second metric is a selected one of a signal strength, a signal-to-noise ratio, a bit error rate, and a carrier-to-noise ratio.

21. The mobile unit of Claim 15, further comprising:  
means for receiving voice information from a user;  
means for generating a packet encoding the voice information; and  
means for communicating the packet for reception by the first BTS and the  
5 second BTS.

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22. Software for selecting between a plurality of packets received by a mobile unit, the software embodied on a computer readable medium and operable to:

- establish a first wireless link with a first base transceiver station (BTS);
- establish a second wireless link with a second BTS;
- receive a first graded packet from the first BTS, wherein the first graded packet encodes a first metric associated with the first wireless link;
- receive a second graded packet from the second BTS, wherein the second graded packet encodes a second metric associated with the second wireless link;
- compare the first metric and the second metric; and
- select either the first graded packet or the second graded packet based on the comparison.

23. The software of Claim 22, wherein the first graded packet further includes a packet identifier, and the second graded packet further includes the packet identifier.

24. The software of Claim 22, wherein the first graded packet and the second graded packet each further includes voice information from a remote device.

25. The software of Claim 24, further operable to generate an audio signal based on the voice information from the selected graded packet.

26. The software of Claim 22, wherein the first metric is encoded in the first graded packet by the first BTS, and the second metric is encoded in the second graded packet by the second BTS.

27. The software of Claim 22, wherein each of the first metric and the second metric is a selected one of a signal strength, a signal-to-noise ratio, a bit error rate, and a carrier-to-noise ratio.

28. The software of Claim 22, further operable to:  
receive voice information from a user;  
generate a packet encoding the voice information; and  
communicate the packet for reception by the first BTS and the second BTS.



29. A base transceiver station (BTS) comprising:  
a network interface operable to receive a packet;  
a processor operable to determine a metric associated with a wireless link  
between a wireless interface and a mobile unit and to generate a graded packet  
5 encoding information from the packet and the metric; and  
the wireless interface operable to communicate the graded packet to the  
mobile unit.

30. The BTS of Claim 29, wherein the processor is further operable to:  
10 monitor the metric associated with the wireless link;  
determine that the metric associated with the wireless link has degraded to a  
predetermined threshold; and  
withdraw from a selection group associated with the mobile unit.

31. The BTS of Claim 30, wherein the processor is further operable to  
15 instruct the mobile unit to discontinue receiving communications from the BTS on a  
Walsh code/frequency combination.

32. The BTS of Claim 30, wherein the processor is further operable to  
20 instruct the wireless interface to discontinue receiving on a Walsh code/frequency  
combination associated with the mobile unit.

33. The BTS of Claim 30, wherein the selection group comprises a  
25 plurality of BTSs each receiving packets for communication to the mobile unit as  
graded packets.

34. The BTS of Claim 29, wherein the processor is further operable to:  
monitor a metric associated with a second wireless link between the wireless  
interface and a second mobile unit;  
determine that the metric associated with the second wireless link has  
exceeded a predetermined threshold; and  
register with a selection group associated with the second mobile unit.

35. The BTS of Claim 29, wherein the metric is a selected one of a signal  
strength, a signal-to-noise ratio, a bit error rate, and a carrier-to-noise ratio.

36. The BTS of Claim 29, wherein:  
the wireless interface is further operable to receive voice information from the  
mobile unit;  
the processor is further operable to generate a second graded packet encoding  
the voice information and the metric, wherein the metric enables elements of a core  
packet network to select between multiple packets encoding the voice information;  
and  
the network interface is further operable to communicate the graded packet to  
the core packet network.

37. The BTS of Claim 29, wherein the metric in the graded packet enables  
the mobile unit to select between a plurality of graded packets received from a  
plurality of BTSs.

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